GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

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THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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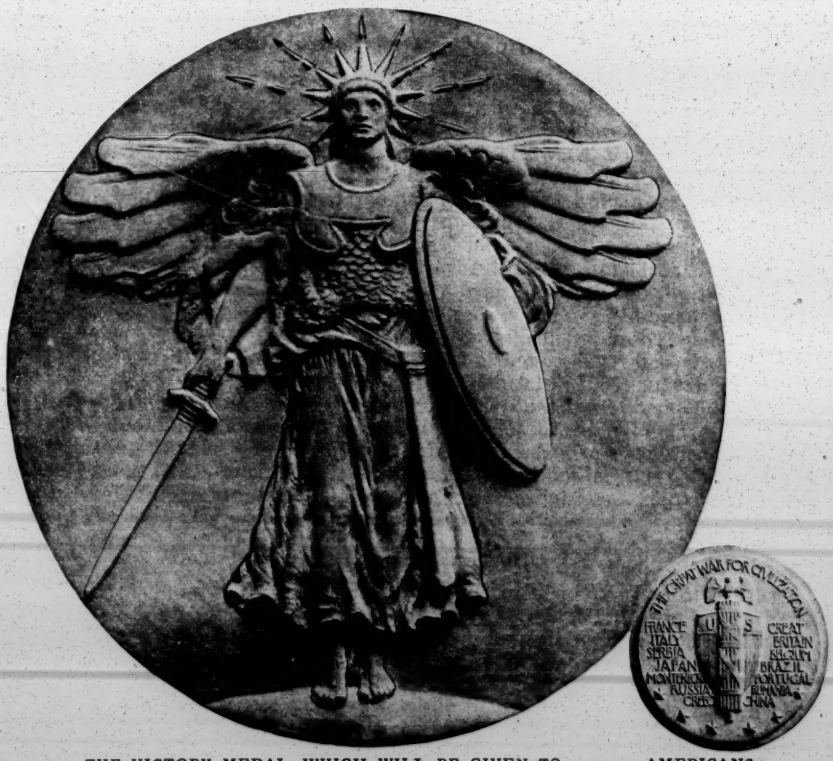
General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

for

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Education



THE VICTORY MEDAL, WHICH WILL BE GIVEN TO 4,500,000 AMERICANS
(SEE BULLETIN NO. 4)

The large disc is the obverse of the medal, showing a winged Victory. It will be noted that the "Victory" figure does not conform wholly to the classic conception. J. E. Fraser, the artist, believed that the outstanding symbol of achievement, to our men from overseas, was the welcoming figure of the Goddess of Liberty statue as their transports entered New York harbor. Hence, into the Greek figure, which is essentially war like, the designer blended the suggestion of the Bartholdi statue, which conveys the idea that liberty was the ideal fought for, and return to the pursuit of peace, the soldiers' and sailors' great reward.

The smaller disc is the reverse of the medal, being reproduced here with a diameter of one and four-tenths inches, the exact size of the medals soon to be distributed. It contains the names of those nations which actually took part in hostile operations against the Central Powers.

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"Open House" At the White House

WHEN President Wilson, because of his illness, received the King of the Belgians while propped up in bed, with a torn sweater about his shoulders, and told the Prince of Wales that the bed in which he lay had been occupied by Baron Renfrew, later King Edward VII, and Abraham Lincoln, he added traditions to the host that already cling about the White House. The home of the Presidents has more tender human memories than any other public building in America.

From cellar, where colored "mammies" have cooked, for presidents, pies like mother used to make, to attic, where the Roosevelt children played and romped, there are associations which range from the quaint to the sublime.

President Wilson's enforced dishabille recalls the premeditated neglige—worn slippers, yarn stockings and old suit—by which Jefferson sought to impress the British Ambassador with American democracy when that official arrived in full official dress to present his credentials. Early morning callers on John Quincy Adams had to cool their heels until that President finished three chapters in the Bible and walked down back of the White House for a swim in the Potomac. To "drop in" at the White House evenings, quite the sociable thing to do, during Jackson's terms, meant finding the Chief Executive before an open fire, in an old loose coat doing duty as a smoking jacket, puffing at a long pipe with a bowl of red clay.

When the Town Butcher Dined With Jefferson

Every room of the White House abounds in history. The oak-paneled state dining room knows dinners of the homely sort that Jefferson gave when the Washington village butcher brought along his son because he heard there was to be an extra place at the table; of the picturesque kind like one given more than a century ago to the Tunisian Ambassador who was aggrieved because everyone would not withdraw while he smoked his pipe, though his secretary showed his good will by ceremoniously kissing the ladies present; of the bizarre kind given by Theodore Roosevelt to cow punchers, ex-prize fighters and distinguished men of letters, not to mention the famous one with Booker T. Washington as a guest, and many memorable banquets like those to Marshall Joffre and Sir Arthur James Balfour, when the china set of 1,500 pieces, and the famous cut glass, every piece of which is engraved with the Arms of the United States, were used.

No room is better known to the public than the East Room, of late years scene of brilliant receptions and White House weddings. It, too, has memories of a cruder democracy when all Washington flocked there to "follow about the servants who carried refreshments, seizing upon whatever they could get" and upon one occasion two "ladies" perched upon the chimney piece to get a better view of the colorful scene.

Many Famous Presents There

Recent discussion of gifts received by the President and Mrs. Wilson while abroad, lends interest to specimens of those, made to other Presidents

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Helgoland: A Military White Elephant

HELGOLAND, naval wall flower during the world war, now seems as much of a military white elephant as the German battleships.

The fortifications, built to defend the entrance to the Kiel Canal, are being dismantled by the English who are using left-over explosives to blast away the towering rocks of this North Sea Gibraltar.

Nature has been unkind to this little island of fairy tales and ghost lore, with its quaint, kindly folk and their queer customs. The sea all but washed it away, brought shoals of fishes but wafted them back across the channel, cut the island in two, but was unkindest of all, perhaps, when it planted the plateau rock land to be a magnet for German militarism. It did not take long, after Germany acquired the island from Great Britain, in 1890, to convert it into a combination super-fort and Coney Island for over-stout German tradesmen.

Thirty miles west of the Schleswig-Holstein coast, less than a square mile in area, the few thousand fisher folk had little chance to make any protest. Yet the sturdy islanders, for centuries, had well defined ideas about self determination—even if they never heard the phrase.

When Women Used "Force to the Utmost"

Upon one memorable occasion the women of the island decided its political fate. About the time William Penn was settling Pennsylvania a Danish admiral captured the island's fishermen one night while they were placing their nets. He threatened to hold them as hostages until the island surrendered to Denmark. Wives, mothers and sisters arose "to a woman" and forced the Schleswig garrison to relinquish any claim upon Helgoland to Denmark.

Before the Hun fortifications capped the main land and the sand dune was overrun by bathing houses, the appearance of the island to the approaching mariner was aptly described in the verse:

"Green is the land,
Red is the rock,
White is the strand—
These are the colors of Helgoland."

From its predominant natural colors, in fact, the island did take its red, white and green, contained in the olden days of lenient Danish and English rule not only in flags and on the curious postage stamps, but exploited in house painting and women's scarfs.

Two centuries ago a violent upheaval of the sea churned out the connecting link between the sand lowland and cavern-pierced cliffs. Fairies were supposed to lurk above the great staircase that mounted to the rocky heights. When a baby was born its feet were buttered promptly so the child would

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and "first ladies," which remain in the White House. The Blue Room contains the most famous of these, the gold mantel clock presented to Washington by Lafayette, who received it from Napoleon. In the Green Room is the Gobelin tapestry, made by a process which now is a lost art, and framed in gold, which the Emperor of Austria gave Mrs. Grant. Nearby is a lacquer cabinet, gift of Japan upon the occasion of the first visit to its ports by American ships. And there are many more.

Strange were the gifts of earlier years. Strangest of all, perhaps, was the cheese sent to Thomas Jefferson, with the admiring inscription, "the greatest cheese in America for the greatest man in America." It was conveyed to Jefferson by a six-horse team. He insisted upon paying for it, and it lasted for more than a year, being the piece de resistanc of many a state dinner in the meantime.

Very quaint all this seems now, but cheeses seem to have been a favorite personal gift in those days, as Thanksgiving turkeys have been in more recent years. Andrew Jackson was the recipient of such gifts as "a whole hog" from Kentucky, whiskey from Pennsylvania, beef from New York, and, from New England, a cheese which weighed half a ton or more. Jackson had no compunctions about receiving the present, but apparently he opposed hoarding of food. Either that or, since his second term was nearing its close, he feared such a cheese might be a burden, anyway he served it at his last public reception. A "nose witness" relates, "the whole atmosphere of every room, and throughout the city, was filled with the odor. We have met it at every turn—the halls of the Capitol have been perfumed with it, from the members who partook of it having carried away great masses in their coat pockets."

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Home Life in France

"BECAUSE, before the war, the foreigners seeking frivolity found it on certain Paris boulevards, they concluded that this was characteristic of France, whereas the average French girl is as zealously shielded from temptation as was ever the daughter of the Pilgrim father. But to love intensely is the French girl's hope and desire; and why should it not be?" says Carl Holliday in a communication to the National Geographic Society.

"The French have long been a shrewd, calculating people who have watched closely every sou. They may seem romantic to foreigners; their ardent protestations of love may seem too frank to us; but not only in financial affairs, but even in their pleasures, they minutely calculate all items.

"Probably there is not in the world the equal of the French housewife in economy and efficiency. Before the war wages were astonishingly low in France, and there must have been continual squeezing of each franc; but, thanks to the ability of the French wife, who could tell from outside evidence that there was unusual stinting in the average home?

"To see a French woman bargain at the market is to learn much in economics, mathematics and oratory. She simply refuses to pay the first price quoted; her genius for 'getting what you can' is admirable.

Family Cornerstone of French Society

"With such women, is it any marvel that the French home is so admirably united? The family is the primal social fact in France, and the parents are 'the fundamental fact without which the organism (the family) could never have come into being.' Hence there is a reverence for parents equaled probably only by the ancestral worship of China. Indeed, it is very doubtful whether the love between husband and wife equals that existing between parent and child.

"There is constant consultation with parents and relatives by sons and daughters of advanced years—a form of consultation scarcely ever heard of in an American family.

"If a Frenchman of thirty or thirty-five proposes changing his profession, he may consult not only his father and his mother, but the entire family group; the proposed marriage of a daughter or a son is often an occasion for a council of the entire clan, including distant relatives that in America would hardly be included in our family tree.

"The world has been fond of pointing out that the French language has no word for 'home.' It has a word possibly even more tender. What a meaning is in the sound of 'foyer.' It includes the concept of hearthstone and much more. It brings to the French mind and heart all the ideals, activities, and dreams of a close, inner circle where obedience is a joy, respect a willing observance, and love an ever-present radiance.

"The foyer is not for the outside world; only behind the locked doors does it really live and flourish. The father may deal with the outside world

slip through the fingers of a fairy who might try to exchange it for the fairy's babe.

They Drowned the Man—But Not His Voice

The ghost of Monk's Rock—the rock was authentic but disappeared long ago—was supposed to be that of a missionary sent by the king of Denmark to preach Luther's doctrine. When he would not recant the islanders pitched him over a cliff but many declared they heard his voice the following night, and many times thereafter.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Helgoland was a center of the North Sea herring fisheries. Then the herring veered back to Scotland's coast and the islanders handed down a tale of the impiety by which they forfeited the boon. Yearly they would form in procession to march about the island to invoke the coming of the fish. One spring, when they had gone but half the route, the herring were sighted. They abandoned the rite and made for the boats. The herring never came again.

Until a few years ago horses were unknown to the island. One story has it that when an old woman saw an Englishman ride one up the hills she dropped dead from the shock of what she believed was a supernatural creature.

Citizens Law Abiding Before "Kultur" Came

Before Germany acquired the island and sent 2,000 soldiers there to man the fort, the citizens were law abiding. When there was an occasional misdemeanor no need to send a police "look out" warning. An islander, when arrested, would go to the little jail and inform the keeper he was to be imprisoned.

In ancient times the island was called Hertha. A temple of Foesta, a Frisian goddess, was there. From the tenth until the fourteenth century it was independent. Then the dukes of Schleswig took it over and used it mainly as a pawn for loans until the Danes acquired it 400 years later. Denmark ceded it to Great Britain early in the nineteenth century and the British, while recognizing its military importance, fortified it only for defensive purposes. But the Germans built a great sea wall of granite and steel, at a cost of $30,000,000, and spent millions more on turrets and big guns.

Visited by so many nationalities, the islanders absorbed customs and ideas of many lands, yet seemed to adorn each with a distinctive touch. They even had a curious quirk in their Satan—a wooden leg—so painted in a picture of the "Temptation of Christ" in the historic church by the island artist of the seventeenth century, Andreas Amelink. Hence a Schleswig saying, "In Helgoland the Devil goes on crutches."

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The Victory Medal

SOME 4,500,000 American soldiers, sailors and marines soon are to receive the Victory Medal— tribute of a grateful nation to all the men in uniform who aided in crushing German ambition to dominate the world.

The National Geographic Magazine, in its Military Insignia Number, published the first authorized illustration of the medal as accepted by the United States Government and furnished the following description and history of its adoption, by Col. R. E. Wyllie of the General Staff U. S. A.:

"During the spring of 1918, while hostilities were still at their height, the different allied and associated nations agreed to adopt a medal which would be the same for all, to commemorate the great war.

"This plan has two advantages: In the first place, it is symbolical of the union and solidarity of purpose which animated the countries fighting against Germany and her allies; secondly, it obviates the necessity of following the practice of exchanging service medals.

"In previous wars it had been customary for nations to bestow their war medals on the personnel of their allies who were attached to them, or associated with them, in different campaigns and engagements. The immensity of the operations in this war, the millions of soldiers engaged therein, and the intermingling of large units under one command, all point to the impossibility of such a procedure in this instance. But by the adoption of a medal, the same for all, it would be unnecessary, since no matter in what army a man served the medals would be alike.

Ribbons Identical; Medals Distinctive

"In order to carry this plan into execution, an interallied commission met in Paris after the armistice. This commission found that it was impracticable to adhere strictly to the original plan to have the medal identical for all, as it would have required the submission of designs from artists of all the nations involved, with a critical examination by a special commission of artists in order to select the most appropriate and most artistic, and there was not sufficient time to go into such detail. The armies were being demobilized and the soldiers had no desire to wait for years before receiving their medals; so it was decided to have an identical ribbon, but allow each country to design its own medal according to general specifications which were drawn up by the commission.

"In this way the medals, while not identical, will follow the same general design, and the artists of each country will have the opportunity of executing the medals for their own soldiers. The competition is keen, as every nation is desirous of having the most artistic production, and the result should be a collection of great beauty.

"The name of this medal in all countries, as determined by this commission, is the Victory Medal. The ribbon is a double rainbow, having the red in the center and with a white thread on each edge. It symbolizes the dawn

of business, but here in the foyer the mother generally rules supreme, and her influence is everywhere seen in it.

"Is it any wonder that when one parent dies the other is immediately taken into the home of the married son or daughter, there to rule as a sort of benevolent, enlightened despot?

Boy and Girl Friendships Not Common

"Owing to the family regulations and the fact that there are few coeducational schools in the country, the French girl seldom makes with boys those confident, personal friendships so common in American.

"In the main the French mother prefers not to trust her daughter alone with a man; if there is to be any courtship, it is better that it be where she can keep an observant eye on them. In spite of such manifest difficulties in the preliminaries, the French girl probably desires marriage more ardently than the American girl confessedly desires it. There is so much supervision of the French lass in her home that her only release seems to lie in marriage.

"Hence a remarkable docility in the matter of the choice of a husband. Some one has said that the French woman marries, not because of love, but with the hope of love afterwards.

"In the better-class families a dowry accompanying the wife will practically be demanded. What does she bring with her? is the not uncommon question of the young man's parents.

"Extremely prudential it all may seem; but one should remember that this dowry is not to be employed by the husband for his personal use, but as a trust fund for the maintenance of the expected children. If the wife dies childless the dowry will, in all probability, revert to her family; the theory of the affair is that such property belongs not to the individual—either husband or wife—but to the family as an institution."

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U. S. Has Many Pacific Possessions

SHOULD the United States acquire the island of Yap, that island will not be an isolated example of American proprietorship in the Pacific. Everybody knows of the Philippines, but not so many folk know of this country's other South Sea insular possessions, small but numerous. These include Guam, Wake, Midway, and some 75 of the Guano Islands, not to mention a portion of the Samoa Group.

In the American Samoan islands are to be found America's South Sea soldiers, who are described, in a communication to The Society by Lorena MacIntyre Quinn, as follows:

"When thinking of the insular possessions of the United States, we are apt to lose sight of the fact that our flag flies over a group of six tiny islands in the South Seas, comprising what is known as American Samoa. Here our government maintains a naval station, on the Island of Tutuila, at Pago Pago, one of the finest and safest harbors in the South Seas.

Naval Officers Form Governing Body

"American Samoa is under the supervision of the Navy Department of the United States. The naval officers stationed at Pago Pago form the governing body of Tutuila and the five other small islands. The yeomen among the bluejackets are valuable office assistants.

"The Fita-Fitas, as the native soldiers are called, constitute an important unit in the government of American Samoa.

"It would be hard to find a more picturesque body of men than these, our South Sea Island soldiers. Tall, broad-shouldered, handsome in features, possessing splendid poise, they are admirable types of their race.

"Their fatigue uniform consists of a sort of black kilt with a bright red stripe around the border. Above the waist and below the knees the uniform is 'Nature's own.'

"A leather belt carrying a dagger on the side holds the kilt, or lava-lava, in place. A bright red turban is the head-dress.

"For dress uniform the Fita-Fitas wear with the lava-lava a sleeveless white undervest.

"When the native soldiers were first taken into the service of the United States, a less abbreviated and more conventional uniform was provided them, with the result that they were constantly suffering from colds: so there was a wise reversion to a uniform on the lines of their native dress.

Fita-Fitas are Efficient Poohbahs

"The Fita-Fitas have municipal as well as military duties. They act as policemen in and about Pago Pago, guard all prisoners in the Pago Pago jail, and frequently are called upon to settle fights at cricket games between rival native villages. The last-named duty is sometimes a severe test for the soldier

of a new era of calm after the storm. It developed in France under the immediate direction of the commission, and when a satisfactory ribbon was produced a piece was sent to each of the allied countries as a standard sample.

Specifications of the Medal

"The specifications of the medal are as follows:

"To be bronze, 36 mm. (1.4 inches) in diameter, and suspended from the ribbon by a ring, the same as most of our medals. On the obverse a winged Victory, standing, full length and full face. On the reverse the inscription 'The Great War for Civilization,' in the language of the country concerned, and either the names or the arms of the allied and associated nations.

"By the terms of the interallied agreement, this medal will be awarded only to combatants. It is not for general distribution to all who participated in war work. In France, for example, almost every male was mobilized as a soldier, but great numbers did no real military work, being utilized in the manufacture of munitions, in agricultural pursuits, on the railroads, and other similar service which was essential to carry on the war, but which could not be considered as military. The medal cannot be awarded to them, although they were technically members of the French Army.

"We had no corresponding class in our Army and Navy; therefore our Victory Medal will be given to all the members of those two services who served on active duty during the war; they are all considered combatants in this connection. This consideration also decided the question as to which of the nations should appear on the reverse of the medal. Under the specifications, as already set forth, it would have been permissible to have included all those that declared war against Germany, or even all those who suspended diplomatic relations, but a number of these did not actually participate in the fighting and therefore had no combatants. As a result, it has been decided that the only nations to be represented on the reverse of the medal will be those which actually took part in hostile operations by sending troops or ships to the theater of war.

Allied Nations in Order of Entry Into War

"The following is a list of such nations, arranged in the order of their entry into the War: Serbia, Russia, France, Belgium, Great Britain, Montenegro, Japan, Italy, Portugal, Rumania, Greece, United States, China, and Brazil.

"A system of clasps was adopted for this medal, and to designate the possession of a battle clasp a small bronze star is worn on the service ribbon. This is a new departure in decorations. The British have used clasps for more than a hundred years, but they have never indicated them on the service ribbon. A man may have a dozen with his medal or none, the service ribbon is the same; so this wearing of small bronze stars on our service ribbon to denote the possession of battle clasps is an innovation. As the medal itself is seldom worn, while the service ribbon is worn frequently, it gives more credit for services performed.

"In accordance with the general principle that senior decorations are to the right, silver citation stars should be worn to the right of bronze stars on the service ribbon."

as an arbitrator, especially when his own village is involved in the controversy.

"When the Governor of American Samoa makes a tour of inspection of Tutuila, he is always accompanied by native soldiers. The Fita-Fita selected to be the orderly on such occasions holds a proud position among his friends.

"The official party is received with great dignity and formality by the chiefs of the villages on these tours, as the Samoans delight in ceremony and speechmaking. The reception accorded the Fita-Fitas by the pretty, vivacious Samoan belles of the different villages is always exceedingly cordial. These maidens, with bronze complexions, are as susceptible to the fascinations of the lava-lava uniform as their sisters in America are partial to khaki and brass buttons.

"The principal feature of the Fita-Fita organization is the band. A little more than a decade ago the natives of American Samoa had never seen a brass instrument, but with infinite patience a bandmaster of the United States Navy eventually taught some of the Fita-Fitas how to play, with the result that today the repertoire of the Fita-Fita band covers a wide range of classical and popular airs."

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